

REMARKS

Claims 1, 2, and 11-15 have been cancelled. New claims 16, 17 and 18 have been added. Dependent claims 3, 4, and 7-10 have been amended to depend on new apparatus claim 16. No new matter has been introduced. For example, support for new claim 16 can be located in FIG. 1 (e.g., elements 1, 11, and 13).

On page 2 of the Office Action, claim 13 was objected to due to insufficient antecedent basis. As Applicants have cancelled claim 13, the objection with respect to claim 13 is moot.

On page 3 of the Office Action, claim 13 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which Applicants regard as the invention. As Applicants have cancelled claim 13, the rejection with respect to claim 13 is moot.

Claims 1-4, 7 and 10-15 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Japanese Patent Application No. 2001-245050A (Keiko) in view of U.S. Patent No. 6317593 (Vossler).

Keiko is directed to operation of a telephone directory. According to the method disclosed in Keiko, a notice of changed number transmitting improper notice is transmitted to a migration terminal 1, which transmitted the notice first-move number list. Keiko also includes an improper notice receiving step in which the notice and performs an alarm display. Keiko further includes a changed-number step by which an old telephone number concerned is changed into a new telephone number.

Vossler is directed to a programmable cellular telephone, which activates selected functions based on a user modifiable schedule. According to Vossler, a controller controls all cellular telephone functions and includes a memory and a clock. The controller further includes a scheduler, which activates and deactivates cellular telephone functions according to entries in a schedule table.

As recited by the language of new claim 16, in at least one embodiment of the present invention, backup copies of telephone directory information received by the claimed apparatus in a data center from two subscribers is searched.

On page 4 of the Office Action, the Examiner alleges that Keiko disclose in Figures 1-3

and paragraph 20-34 a telephone number changing means to change a number in response to a request to a telephone directory of a registrant who's phone number has been registered in the phone number changer's directory.

Applicants submit that in contrast to Keiko's disclosure, new claim 16 recites a storage unit storing first and second backup copies of telephone directory information received from first and second subscribers, respectively. The backup copies are searched by first and second searching units, as recited in claim 16. The storage unit and the two searching units are part of the apparatus that is disposed in a data center, according to the embodiment of the present invention identified by claim 16.

Applicants respectfully submit that, in contrast to the present invention, Keiko's service center 5 has no backup copies of subscribers' telephone directory information. Further, Keiko fails to provide first and second search units, due to the lack of backup copies in the maintenance center 5.

Rather, the service center 5 of Keiko requests the number-changing user ("user A" in FIG. 3) to create a list of other users ("user P" and "user Z") whose respective directories should be updated (T1 in FIG. 3). The user creates a destination number list accordingly (ST2-ST4) and sends it back to the service center 5 (T2). Then the service center 5 sends a phone number change notice to each user specified in the received destination number list (T3 and T4). The service center 5 does not perform any function after the phone number change notice is sent, except handling an error at steps ST7 and T5 in some exceptional situations.

In contrast to Keiko, in the present invention, the first and second searching unit, as recited in claim 16, automatically identifies a second subscriber who needs an update, and the telephone number changing unit updates a backup copy of the second subscriber's telephone directory information with the first subscriber's new telephone number (= third number). Applicants respectfully submit that the above-identified feature of the present invention is neither disclosed nor taught by Keiko.

Vossler simply stores a schedule to control operation of a telephone's functions and does not disclose or suggest store telephone directory information from first and second subscribers, much less a first and second searching unit, as recited in claim 16, that automatically identify a second subscriber who needs an update. Nor does Vossler offer any disclosure or suggestion of updating a backup copy.

In light of the foregoing, claims 16, 17, and 18 are patentable over the references (claims 17 and 18 recite language similar to that of claim 16), as neither of the references, taken alone or in combination, teach or suggest the above-identified features of the claims.

As dependent claims 3-4, 7, 8, and 10 depend from independent claim 16, the dependent claims are patentable over the references for at least the reasons presented above for the independent claims. The rejection with respect to the cancelled claims is moot.

On page 5 of the Office Action, claim 9 was rejected under 35 § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Keiko in view of Vossler and further in view of U.S. Pat. No. 6,289,091 (Lautenschlager). Although Vossler discloses a change order to make a change in an assignment, Vossler does not disclose or suggest, a telephone number changing unit that updates a backup copy of a second subscriber's telephone directory information with a first subscriber's new telephone number. Therefore, claim 9, via claim 16, is patentable over Keiko in view of Vossler and further in view of Lautenschlager, as none of the references, taken alone or in combination, teach or suggest the above-identified feature of claim 9, via claim 16.

If there are any formal matters remaining after this response, the Examiner is requested to telephone the undersigned to attend to these matters.

If there are any additional fees associated with filing of this Amendment, please charge the same to our Deposit Account No. 19-3935.

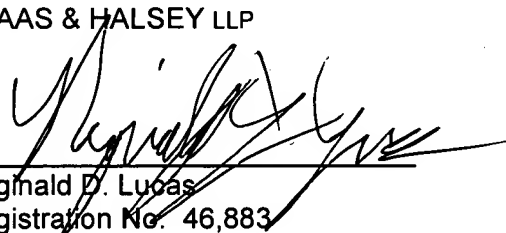
Respectfully submitted,

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